



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

Press Release

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For Immediate Release

Craig Stenning Elected to Board of Directors for the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors

Cranston, RI, July, 2011 – Craig Stenning, Director of the Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals (BHDDH), was elected to the Board of Directors of the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD) at the Annual 2011 Commissioners Meeting in Alexandria, VA. Stenning, who was elected to a two-year term in July, represents the Northeast Regional Commissioners from all of the New England States as well as New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware.

In this role, Stenning will be working on the current issues the organization is involved with including the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, housing for individuals with mental illness, interfacing with the criminal justice system, the integration of behavioral healthcare with primary care, and disaster planning. “I am honored to be elected to this Board by my fellow Commissioners and to work on many, important mental health issues. I am pleased that Rhode Island’s work in the areas of recovery, housing opportunities, employment and community living was recognized in this election.”

Craig S. Stenning

After being appointed as Director of the Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals by Governor Donald Carcieri in 2009, Stenning recently was reappointed to the position by Governor Lincoln Chafee. Stenning began his work with the State in 2000 when he was appointed the first Executive Director of the Division of Behavioral Healthcare, previously serving as CEO and founder of CODAC Treatment Centers since 1971. He recently received an Honorary Doctorate Degree in Health Sciences from Rhode Island College. The degree was presented in recognition of Stenning’s “life’s work which has centered on providing others with the support services necessary to live fuller lives, thereby opening up worlds of opportunity for those who might otherwise dwell in the shadowy margins of life.”

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About the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors

NASMHPD represents state executives responsible for the \$36.7 billion public mental health service delivery system serving 6.7 million people annually in all 50 states, 4 territories, and the District of Columbia. NASMHPD operates under a cooperative agreement with the National Governor's Association.

About the Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals.

BHDDH is committed to assuring access to quality services and support for Rhode Islanders with developmental disabilities, mental health and substance abuse issues and chronic, long-term medical and psychiatric conditions. In addition to planning for the development of new services and prevention activities, the department's mission includes addressing the stigma attached to these disabilities.

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